The Uniform Federal Policy for Implementing Environmental Quality Systems (UFP-QS)

> **The UFP-QS is a consensus document that addresses real and perceived inconsistencies and deficiencies in quality control for laboratory data within and across governmental organizations which result in greater costs, time delays, and the potential for increased risk.**
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> **The UFP-QS was developed as a collaborative effort by the Intergovernmental Data Quality Task Force (IDQTF). Participants include: U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The IDQTF was established in 1997, and chaired by the Director of the EPA/Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office.**

Background

In the Spring of 2000, a Memorandum of Understanding was approved between DOE/Office of Environmental Management (EM) and EPA for the purpose of developing a uniform federal policy for implementing a standardized structured approach to planning and conducting environmental data collection operations. The DOE participated as a consensus member in the IDQTF . It is represented by the Office of Environment, Safety, and Health (EH), and the Office of Environmental Management (EM).

The IDQTF has issued (1) *Uniform Federal policy for Implementing Environmental Quality Systems (UFP)*, November 2000; (2) draft *Uniform Policy for Quality Assurance Project Plans (UFP-QAPP)*, June 2001; and (3) "Compendium for QA/QC measures in the CERCLA process," January 2002.

Objectives

- Provides essential elements of a quality system for management of environmental data collection and use and environmental technology programs.

- Provides a framework to Federal agencies for documenting and implementing an acceptable intergovernmental quality system that is based on Part A of the American National Standard, "*Specifications and Guidelines for Quality Systems for Environmental Data Collection and Environmental Technology Programs, the American National Standards Institute/ American Society for Quality Control Standard E4 (ANSI/ ASQC E4, 1994).*"

- Provides guidance to document , assess, and improve existing quality systems.

- Encourages federal agencies to adopt this document as policy, rule, or guidance for managing environmental data collection and use.

Audience

The UFP-QS was developed to clarify the roles of senior managers, line managers , program and project staff, quality assurance personnel, and other staff responsible for implementation of quality systems for environmental data collection.

Scope

Quality Assurance for Environmental data collection and use.

Approach

The UFP-QS is based on ANSI/ASQC E4, 1994, which is the most appropriate standard that specifically addresses quality systems for environmental data collection and use and environmental technology programs. The use of national standard such as E4 is encouraged by the National Technology Transfer And Advancement Act.

Document Description

The Quality System is documented at an organizational level in a Quality Management Plan (QMP). The QMP details how the Quality System is to be implemented throughout the organization for which it is written. It includes information by which the organization will manage, plan, implement, assess, and continually improve the products, services, and activities involved in environmental data collection and use or environmental technology management.

The UFP-QS document consists of ten (10) chapters covering the 10 elements that must be addressed in an organization's QMP in order to conform with ANSI/ASQC E4:

- Management and Organization;
- Quality System and Description;
- Personnel Qualification and Training;
- Procurement of Products, Services, and Activities;
- Documents and Records;
- Computer Hardware and Software;
- Planning;
- Management of Work Process Implementation;
- Assessment and Response; and
- Quality Improvement.

The requirements described in this policy are intended to facilitate implementation of ANSI/ASQC E4 with regard to environmental

data collection and use and environmental technology development and implementation. ANSI/ASQC E4 covers both mandatory specifications and nonmandatory guidelines for Quality Systems.

In accordance with E4, this document addresses both requirements and guidance. Requirements are presented in the text that makes up the bulk of this document, while guidance is presented in text boxes. The text boxes attempt to illuminate the requirements of this policy and enhance the reader's understanding.

Benefits

- The UFP-QS improves effectiveness of Federal environmental programs by focusing on results, and quality of data;

- it clarifies roles and responsibilities in managing and overseeing environmental data; and

- it enhances accountability and confidence in environmental decision.

Access

The UFP will be published jointly by DOD, DOE, and EPA. It was approved for DOE use by EH-1 on December 13, 2002. The UFP is available at:
http://www.epa.gov/swerffrr/library/data.htm.

ANSI/ASQC E4, is available at: ASQC, P.O.Box 3005, Milwaukee, WI 53201; 414-272-8575.

> *Questions of policy or questions requiring policy decisions will not be dealt with in EH-41 Information Briefs unless that policy has already been established through appropriate documentation. Please refer any questions concerning the subject material covered in this Information Brief to Emile Boulos at: emile.boulos@eh.doe.gov; 202-586-1306.*